

**SUMMARY OF THE  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING  
AUGUST 31, 2000**

The Quality Systems (QS) Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on August 31, 2000, from 1 - 3 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by its chair, Mr. Scott Siders of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to continue committee work leading up to the Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC VII) scheduled for October 31-November 3, 2000.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Siders reviewed the agenda for the meeting and established goals and schedules to be accomplished before the NELAC VII meeting beginning on October 31, 2000 in Las Vegas, NV. All committee members were present for today's teleconference. Mr. Siders stated that comments on Chapter 5 had been received from Dr. Ken Jackson and adopted by the Quality Systems Committee.

**TOPICS OF DISCUSSION**

**Asbestos Subcommittee Report**

The Asbestos subcommittee reported that information had been circulated at the Williamsburg, VA, meeting and that subcommittee members are still being sought. Mr. Siders and Mr. George Kulasingam will contact the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) personnel for committee member recommendations. They will also call on Mr. Mike Beard of Research Triangle Institute for suggestions. The time frame for preparation and finalization of an appendix for asbestos may extend beyond the next annual NELAC meeting.

**ELAB Comments on Appendix D, Section D.1**

Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) recommendations for changes to Chapter 5, Appendix D, Section D.1, "Chemical Testing," were reviewed. Proposed language developed by Mr. Siders and Mr. Charlie Hooper (which incorporated ELAB comments) was also discussed. Overall, the committee is supportive of the changes and additions made by the ELAB. Committee members commented on several items:

1. timing of method blank runs, especially for laboratories working several shifts;
2. how to consider non-target contaminants that do not interfere with detection and quantification of the analyte(s) of interest;
3. variation in language regarding matrix in Sections D.1. 1 a) 1) iii) as compared to D.1.1 b) 1) iii);

4. use of the word “should” in D.1.1 b);
5. the addition of the word “effect” to the sentence in D.1.1 b);
6. and the ELAB language concerning matrix specific QC samples and DQOs.

At the suggestion of one meeting participant, rather than attempt to edit the ELAB comments further, it was decided that Mr. Siders would ensure that the original ELAB comments on Section D.1 are posted to the NELAC Website and ask for comments and feedback from the general NELAC community. This process will give all stakeholders an opportunity to view and comment on ELAB’s recommendations for Section D.1. Further committee and audience discussion will occur at NELAC VII on November 1st. The Quality Systems Committee will continue to study D.1 in preparation for public discussions at NELAC VII. Finalization of changes to D.1 will occur after the interim meeting.

A copy of the e-mail that was sent to Dr. J. Wilson Hershey is shown below:

Sept. 8, 2000

Dr. Hershey,

The NELAC Quality Systems Committee has reviewed ELAB's May 11, 2000, recommendations for changes to Appendix D of Chapter 5 of the NELAC Standards. In fact, I and others on the Committee had even drafted proposed language which incorporated the vast majority of ELAB's recommended changes. This language was presented to the entire Committee along with your original comments and discussed at length. On the recommendation of Silky Labie and with the concurrence of the rest of the Committee, it was decided that due to the significant nature and importance of your comments that it would be best at this time to not make any proposed changes to D.1 for the Interim Meeting, but to instead present the ELAB comments as an agenda item at the Interim Meeting for public discussion and comment.

The entire Committee generally favors the ELAB comments and thinks they have considerable merit. However, we feel it is best to discuss your comments during the Quality Systems Committee session at the Interim Meeting and solicit NELAC stakeholder comments on the ELAB proposed changes. Since the Interim Meeting is moved up this year we feel the Quality Systems Committee will have ample time to revisit your comments after the Interim Meeting (taking into consideration the comments made on the ELAB proposed changes by other NELAC stakeholders).

I can assure you that the Quality Systems Committee will take additional action on ELAB's D.1 comments. I would be happy to talk with you or attend an ELAB meeting to discuss this matter more. I want to thank the ELAB subcommittee for their fine work they did on presenting the proposed changes to D.1. Please give me a call at (217) 785-5163 if I can answer any questions you might have or if you would like me to be on the agenda for a future ELAB meeting/conference call.

Regards,

Scott Siders

## **Microbiology Testing Subcommittee**

Ms. Marty Casstevens reported on progress in addressing the microbiology sections of Chapter 5. Additional comments are being solicited. Some of the passages in the microbiology sections need to be reworded to express and explain generic terms in the language of microbiology. The subcommittee has another conference call scheduled for 9/7/00. All revisions to the section will be sent to the chair and to the contractor no later than 9/8/00. The draft revisions will be posted to the NELAC Website for general review. Comments received will be discussed at NELAC VII in Las Vegas.

## **ISO 17025**

International Standards Organization (ISO) 17025 passages can now be incorporated directly to NELAC documents, rather than by reference only. A plan of action needs to be devised and personnel need to be assigned to this task. Discussion of ISO 17025 will continue in the next teleconference. The committee is preparing a cross-walk spreadsheet comparing ISO 17025, ISO 9000, ISO Guide 25 and NELAC Chapter 5. This table will be used as a starting point for integrating ISO 17025 and NELAC Chapter 5.

## **DoD Comments**

A report on the Department of Defense (DoD) comments on Chapter 5 was given. As time for discussion was limited, the committee was asked to share further comments by e-mail. Topics discussed by section included: definition of “lot” in 5.9.4.2.1 d; omitting the word “initial” in 5.10.2.1 c); the 4EC specification and range of acceptability in 5.11.3 a) 1).

## **Deadlines for Committee Revisions for NELAC VII**

All revisions to be discussed at NELAC VII must be completed and forwarded to RTI by September 8, 2000. This deadline will allow RTI to make the needed revisions to Chapter 5. These changes will be reviewed and discussed during the 9/14/00 Quality Systems teleconference.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of this committee is scheduled for September 14, 2000 at 1 p.m. EDT.

**ACTION ITEMS  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 31, 2000**

| <b>Item No.</b> | <b>Action Item</b>   | <b>Date to be Completed</b> |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1               | <u>Asbestos Subcommittee</u> . Contact NIST, AIHA, and Mike Beard at RTI regarding subcommittee member suggestions. (Siders, Kulasingam)                           | 9/14/00                     |
| 2               | <u>Section D.1</u> . See that ELAB comments are posted to the web site and that public comment is solicited. (Siders) Continue to review ELAB comments (Committee) | soon                        |
| 3               | <u>Microbiology Testing Subcommittee</u> . Revisions to Section on Microbiology to Mr. Siders and contractor following 9/7/00 teleconference (Casstevens)          | 9/8/00                      |
| 4               | <u>DoD comments</u> . Continue review and discussion by e-mail in preparation for further discussion. (Committee)  | 9/14/00                     |
| 5               | All proposed revisions to Chapter 5 forwarded to contractor.   | 9/8/00                      |

**PARTICIPANTS  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 31, 2000**

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Affiliation</b>                                | <b>Phone Numbers</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| Mr. Scott D. Siders<br>Chair  | IL Environmental Protection<br>Agency             | T: 217-785-5163<br>F: 217-524-0944<br>E: epa6113@epa.state.il.us            |
| Ms. Martha Casstevens   | Froehling and Robertson                           | T: 804-264-2701<br>F: 804-264-0782<br>E: mcasstevens@fandr.com              |
| Dr. Peter De Lisle  | Coastal Bioanalysts                               | T: 804-694-8285<br>F: 804-695-1129<br>E: pdelisle@coastalbio.com            |
| Mr. Raymond J. Frederici  | Severn Trent Laboratories                         | T: 708-534-5200<br>F: 708-534-5211<br>E: rfederici@stl-inc.com              |
| Mr. Clifford R. Glowacki  | Technikon   | T: 916-929-8001<br>F: 916-929-8020<br>E: cglowacki@cerp-aiger.org           |
| Mr. Charlie Hooper  | USEPA   | T: 706-355-8838<br>F: 706-355-8803<br>E: hooper.charles@epa.gov             |
| Dr. George Kulasingam   | CA Department of Health —<br>ELAB                 | T: 510-540-2800<br>F: 510-849-5106<br>E: gkulasin@dhs.ca.gov                |
| Ms. Sylvia S. Labie<br>(Board liaison)  | Florida Department of<br>Environmental Protection | T: 850-488-2796<br>F: 850-922-4614<br>E: labie_s@dep.state.fl.us            |
| Mr. David Mendenhall  | UT Department of Health                           | T: 801-584-8470<br>F: 801-584-8501<br>E: dmendenh@doh.state.ut.us           |
| Mr. Jeff Nielsen  | City of Tallahassee Water<br>Quality Division     | T: 850-891-1232<br>F: 850-891-1062<br>E: nielsenj@mail.ci.tlh.fl.us         |
| Dr. Fred Siegelman  | USEPA, OEI  | T: 202-564-5173<br>F: 202-565-2441<br>E: siegelman.frederic@epamail.epa.gov |
| Dr. W. Cary Eaton,<br>substituting for:<br>Ms. Cynthia A. Salmons<br>(Contractor Support) | Research Triangle Institute                       | T: 919-541-6948<br>F: 919-541-7215<br>E: cas@rti.org                        |

